

# Matthew Survey, Section 1

## The Manifestation of Christ to Israel

Lesson 20 • Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview and Lesson Summaries

### About This Section

This single-lesson section surveys the climactic event that closes Matthew chapter 3: the public manifestation of Christ to Israel at his baptism by John, fulfilling Isaiah chapter 42, verse 1. Keith establishes that the purpose of Christ's baptism was not the remission of sins but the fulfillment of God's prophesied plan to put the Messiah on open display before the nation. John himself declares in John 1:31 that he came baptizing with water precisely so that Christ should be made manifest to Israel, having been instructed by God the Father that the one upon whom the Spirit descends and remains is the Christ. The two-part manifestation — the Spirit descending like a dove and the voice from heaven declaring divine delight — fulfills both components of Isaiah 42:1. Keith also corrects a common misapplication of Isaiah 53:12, showing from Mark 15 that 'numbered with the transgressors' is applied by scripture itself to the crucifixion, not the baptism. The section closes with the introduction of Matthew chapter 4 and the immediately following event: the Spirit leading Christ into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, as he begins to qualify himself as the Kinsmen Redeemer of Israel.



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### Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 20	Manifestation of Christ to Israel: Matt. 3:13-17 surveyed; John's role and testimony (John 1:24-34); Isaiah 42:1 fulfilled in two parts; Isaiah 53:12 misapplication corrected (Mark 15:27-28); two functions of baptism distinguished; Matthew 4 temptation introduced

### Lesson Summaries

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**The Manifestation of Christ to Israel** *Matthew 3:13–17; Isaiah 42:1; John 1:24–34*

**The Setting — Jesus Comes to John (Matt. 3:13–15)**

- Jesus comes from Galilee to Jordan to be baptized of John — not for remission

of sins; he bears no defilement (v. 13)

- John initially forbids him: 'I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?' — recognizing Christ as the one who baptizes with the Holy Ghost (v. 14)
- Jesus answers: 'Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness' — a specific prophetic purpose must be accomplished (v. 15)
  - John's public hesitancy draws the curiosity and focused attention of those present — the environment for beholding is set

#### **The Manifestation Event (Matt. 3:16–17; Luke 3:21–22)**

- Jesus goes up straightway out of the water; the heavens are opened and the Spirit of God descends like a dove and lights upon him (v. 16)
- A voice from heaven declares: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' — addressed to the people present, not to Christ (v. 17)
  - Luke 3:21-22: 'when all the people were baptized' — the event is public, witnessed by those gathered

#### **Fulfillment of Isaiah 42:1**

- Isaiah 42:1: 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him' — God's advance announcement of how Christ would be made manifest to Israel
- Spirit descending = fulfillment of 'I have put my spirit upon him' — a visible, eye-witness sign available to all present
- Voice from heaven = fulfillment of 'mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth' — an audible declaration by God the Father himself
  - The behold package of Isaiah 42:1 is twofold: something to see and something to hear — both provided simultaneously and publicly

#### **John's Testimony — John 1:24–34**

- John 1:31 — 'And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water' — manifesting Christ was a stated purpose of John's entire water ministry
- 'I knew him not' = lack of personal acquaintance and identification beforehand, not absence of doctrinal knowledge about the Messiah
- John 1:33 — God the Father's advance instruction: 'Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost'
  - From the event onward John's identifying ministry becomes focal — 'Behold the Lamb of God' (John 1:29, 36); he begins to decrease as Christ increases

#### **Correcting a Common Misapplication — Isaiah 53:12**

- A common view holds that Christ's baptism fulfills Isaiah 53:12 ('he was numbered with the transgressors') as an act of identifying himself with sinners
- Scripture itself refutes this: Mark 15:27-28 explicitly applies Isaiah 53:12 to the crucifixion — 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS'
  - Isaiah 53:12 belongs at the cross; the baptism has its own distinct prophetic passage — Isaiah 42:1; each event fulfills its own prophecy

#### **Two Functions of Baptism — A Doctrinal Clarification**

- A baptism can function as (a) cleansing from defilement resulting in sanctification and new identification, or (b) sanctification and new identification alone without preceding defilement
- Christ's baptism is type (b) — no defilement, no confession of sins; the purpose

is entirely identification and manifestation

- The remnant's second baptism (Holy Ghost) also falls under type (b) — this distinction carries forward into the prescription for cleansing

#### Introduction to Matthew 4 — Qualifying as Redeemer

- Immediately after the manifestation the Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness 'to be tempted of the devil' — stated purpose, not incidental (Matt. 4:1)
- Christ must qualify himself as the Kinsmen Redeemer: demonstrating he is not in the same predicament as those he came to redeem
- Two accounts given: Matthew 4 (Son of David perspective) and Luke 4 (Son of Adam perspective) — each has a distinct doctrinal reason

## Key Doctrinal Distinctions

### Purpose of Christ's Baptism vs. Purpose of Israel's Baptism

Israel's water baptism was the first component of the prescription for cleansing — a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, involving confession and cleansing from defilement. Christ's baptism served an entirely different purpose: he bore no defilement and made no confession. His baptism was designed by God the Father to publicly manifest the Messiah to Israel by means of two signs — the Spirit descending and the voice from heaven — fulfilling Isaiah 42:1.

### Isaiah 53:12 Applied at the Cross, Not the Baptism

A common teaching holds that Christ submitted to John's baptism to fulfill Isaiah 53:12 ('he was numbered with the transgressors') by identifying himself with sinners. Scripture corrects this: Mark 15:27-28 explicitly cites Isaiah 53:12 as fulfilled at the crucifixion — 'with him they crucify two thieves... And the scripture was fulfilled, which said, AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS.' The baptism fulfills Isaiah 42:1. Each event fulfills its own distinct prophetic passage.

### John 'Knew Him Not' — Personal Identification, Not Doctrinal Ignorance

When John says 'I knew him not' (John 1:31, 33) he is not claiming ignorance about the coming Messiah. He had full doctrinal awareness of who the Christ was and what he would do. The 'not knowing' refers to personal acquaintance and the ability to make an unequivocal public identification of which specific individual was the Messiah. That identification would only become certain — and therefore openly testifiable — once John witnessed the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, per God the Father's advance instruction.

### The Behold Package of Isaiah 42:1 — Two-Part Public Evidence

Isaiah 42:1 contains God's advance announcement of how he would manifest Christ to Israel: 'Behold my servant... mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him.' This behold is a two-

part package: (1) 'I have put my spirit upon him' — a visible sign, fulfilled by the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Christ; (2) 'in whom my soul delighteth' — an audible declaration, fulfilled by the voice from heaven: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Both components were provided simultaneously and publicly, giving Israel undeniable eye-witness grounds for identifying the Messiah.

## Two Functions of Baptism — Cleansing and Identification vs. Identification Alone

A baptism normally involves cleansing from a prior defilement, resulting in sanctification and a new identification. However, a baptism can also function for sanctification and new identification without any preceding defilement being in view. Christ's baptism is the prime example of this second function: no defilement, no remission of sins, no confession — only the sanctification and identification aspects operating. This same distinction will apply to the remnant's second baptism (Holy Ghost) in the prescription for cleansing and must be kept clear to understand that event correctly.

## Key Scripture References

Reference	Topic
<b>Matthew 3:13–15</b>	Jesus comes to John; John's hesitancy; 'to fulfill all righteousness'
<b>Matthew 3:16–17</b>	Spirit descends like a dove; voice from heaven — 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'
<b>Matthew 4:1</b>	Spirit leads Christ into wilderness immediately after manifestation; purpose: to be tempted of the devil
<b>Matthew 4:17</b>	Christ begins preaching after the manifestation: 'Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'
<b>Luke 3:21–22</b>	All the people present; Spirit descends in bodily shape; voice from heaven — public nature confirmed
<b>John 1:24–28</b>	Pharisees question John; John declares the one standing among them whom they know not
<b>John 1:29</b>	John: 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world'
<b>John 1:31</b>	John: 'that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water'
<b>John 1:33–34</b>	God the Father's advance instruction to John; Spirit descending and remaining identifies the Christ
<b>John 1:35–36</b>	Next day — 'Behold the Lamb of God'; identifying ministry becomes focal point of John's work
<b>Isaiah 42:1–4</b>	'Behold my servant... mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him' — fulfilled at Matt. 3:13-17

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<b>Isaiah 53:12</b>	'He was numbered with the transgressors' — belongs to the crucifixion, not the baptism
<b>Mark 15:25–28</b>	Crucifixion: Isaiah 53:12 explicitly applied — 'AND HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS'
<b>Malachi 3:1</b>	Forerunner prophecy — messenger to go before Messiah's face; John's role in manifesting Christ to Israel

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